

TENTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL

FOR

IDIOTIC AND FEEBLE-MINDED YOUTH.

BOSTON:
WILLIAM WHITE, PRINTER, 4 SPRING LANE.
1858.

TO THE TRUSTEES

OF THE

MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL FOR IDIOTIC CHILDREN.

GENTLEMEN,—

As a report upon the condition of the Institution has been so lately submitted to the Legislature, the present one may well be brief.

The experience of the past year confirms that of previous ones. It brings fresh proof of the existence of a large class of unfortunate beings whose sad condition calls for an establishment like this, and shows how much it can do for their relief.

Nor is this experience confined to our own school. The three Institutions which have sprung up in other States since ours was organized are rapidly extending their usefulness. They have become so deeply rooted in the confidence and regard of wise and good men that they are certain to be maintained.

Within three months the foundations have been laid for a capacious and stately building for the Pennsylvania School; and measures have been taken in other States for embracing idiots in the circle of public benefaction.

The practical working of our School has been satisfactory. More applications for admission have been made than could be granted, for want of room and means.

The effect of long and patient training are beginning to be

apparent in the condition of those pupils who have been longest in the school.

A few remain as they were last year. They are utterly unconscious of any thing but the pressing animal sensations of the moment; and would probably relapse into their old habits if left to themselves. The majority, however, have become confirmed in habits of order and propriety; and have so much love of approbation, and so much faculty of imitation, that with a little help from their friends, they will probably deport themselves decently through life. A few give even greater satisfaction; they show some real self-respect and self-reliance.

There are several boys and girls who are industrious and really useful. As soon as suitable places can be found for them, they may leave the School with reasonable prospect of usefulness and happiness.

The details of the condition of the pupils will be given by the Resident Superintendent. The general condition of the Institution has been excellent; and the persons employed have performed the duties of their several offices in a satisfactory manner. The report of the Treasurer will show the condition of the treasury; and that there is on hand a cash balance of \$1,928.66. These reports, however, show only gross amounts of receipts and payments, and it may not be amiss to make here a general statement of the financial history and condition of the Institution.

As is well known, it commenced without a dollar of capital. It was necessary therefore to incur debt, not for current expenses, but for furniture, apparatus, &c., and to accumulate the means of paying it by receiving private pupils at rates higher than the actual cost. It was impossible, of course, to do this at first, and a loan was therefore resorted to. Whatever was needed for consumption had to be bought on credit, and credit had to be given for board of pupils. The balance of indebtedness was of course against the Institution for several years. Afterwards, however, it was reduced to an amount less than the real value of the personal property that had been gradually acquired; and the loan was paid. The accumulation was slower than had been anticipated, because it was found that the waste

and destruction of household articles, such as bedding, and the like, were greater than had been foreseen.

At the beginning of the year 1855 the nominal balance of indebtedness against the Institution was \$2,389.92; that is, the outstanding debts exceeded the outstanding credits by that amount. The real balance, however, was the other way, because the furniture and apparatus represented a larger sum.

By economy and thrift, by the profits from private pupils, and by having the services of the general superintendent and physician rendered gratuitously, most of this indebtedness has been paid off, and the balance is now only \$850.20. This is, in fact, the remnant of the debt incurred in the first eight years, in the purchase of about \$3,000 worth of furniture, previous to the grant of the State and the subscription of friends in 1855.

During the year 1855 the sum of \$30,100 over and above the ordinary income was obtained for the express purpose of erecting and furnishing a suitable building for the permanent location of the Institution. Of this \$25,000 was granted as an express appropriation by the State of Massachusetts, and \$5,100 obtained by private subscriptions.

The object of these grants and donations was the purchase of an estate and the construction and furnishing a suitable building for the permanent location of the Institution.

This has been done under the direction of the Building Committee, as far and as speedily as was practicable.

They expended in 1855 and 1856, for the purchase of land, construction of building and furniture, as per account rendered and audited, and printed in the Annual Report, . \$27,451 94
In 1857, there was expended for construction acct., 1,444 86
“ “ furniture “ 557 71

			\$29,454 51
Leaving a balance yet to be expended of . . .			545 49
			<hr/> \$30,000 00

The Committee expended more than \$25,000 upon construction account, and less than \$5,000 upon furniture account. They felt at liberty so to do, because, first, their instructions

were general—"to purchase land, to construct and furnish a building at a total cost not exceeding \$30,000;" second, because there was only a nominal, not a real distinction, between the two accounts; third, because it seemed necessary to finish entirely and furnish completely the front house; and to enclose the other, and finish and furnish it afterwards.

The accounts of the Committee have been duly audited, and are on file, with the vouchers.

The present house is finished and furnished in a very substantial manner; and it is found to answer the purposes for which it was intended. It is well lighted, well ventilated, and easily warmed; but it is not large enough for the actual and pressing wants of the Institution, and it is altogether too small for the prospective ones.

This is not the fault of the Committee, for the main building was intended to be used in connection with that in the rear; and until that is finished, and the school-rooms removed thither, the main building will be unduly crowded.

I most earnestly desire, therefore, that the original plan should be carried out as speedily as possible; for not only will it give room in the main building, but will nearly double the capacity of the Institution. Instead of sixty pupils in a crowded condition, we could have about a hundred well accommodated.

Nor would this increase of pupils necessarily imply any increased cost to the State, because the new pupils would be from a class of persons, who, though indigent, are able to pay a sum equal to the actual cost of board, though quite unable to pay \$300 or even \$250 a year—the lowest sum for which they can be sent to a private school.

The cost of finishing the rear building will be about \$5,000. The work, however, will be like putting the key-stone to an unfinished arch, it will perfect and consolidate the whole. A strenuous effort, therefore, should be made to do this now, even in the face of the present difficulties.

If the money cannot be raised in any other way, [and we are told it cannot,] then the State should be earnestly appealed to; and if the appeal is made with sufficient earnestness, it will not be in vain.

When the buildings are completed and furnished, the Institution can go on and maintain the present number of State beneficiaries, without further increase of the State's annual appropriation. It must, however, rely upon a continuance of that; for the school cannot reasonably expect much in the way of donations or legacies from the rich for a long time to come. It must live down a popular notion that idiots are excluded from the benefits of the law of improbability. It must long struggle against a feeling of repulsion, amounting almost to disgust, in the minds of many, which, in spite of themselves, checks the spirit of Christian charity towards these poor children.

The friends and supporters of the School must be content to go on silently in their good work from the mere love thereof, unsupported by popular favor, and unrewarded by the thanks even of those for whose good they labor.

The Trustees of course will do this cheerfully and resolutely; but at least they ought to feel that they may rely upon hearty and sufficient support from the State.

The duty of embracing idiots in the circle of public benefactions is conceived only by communities that have risen high in the scale of Christian civilization. Massachusetts was the first State in this country to take public action in the matter. She first put her hand to the plough. Others are following her generous lead; and she must not look back until the work is done. Unless she abandons the whole policy of caring for those who have lost their reason, she must include those also who lack reason.

The capacity of idiotic children for great improvement by means of special care and training having been demonstrated through her means, she will not take such a backward step as to abandon the school until provision is made for this class of persons, either in supplementary branches of the hospitals for insane, or in some other way.

The Trustees, therefore, counting upon the continuance of the State's bounty; resolving to merit it by frugality and industry; and relying upon that blessing which is sure to at-

tend all good works done in good faith, may go on and extend the usefulness of the school as widely as possible.

Respectfully,

SAMUEL G. HOWE.

Gen. Supt., pro tem.

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RESIDENT SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT.

Massachusetts School for Idiotic and Feeble-Minded Youth,
BOSTON, DECEMBER 31, 1857.

To DR. S. G. HOWE.

DEAR SIR,—The past has been an eventful three months for those persons connected with this establishment. Disease has visited us, and lain his hand on teachers and pupils. Our house has for some time borne more the appearance of a hospital than a school. The measles pervaded our household, and in many cases in severe form. We are now doing better.

As a consequence of so much sickness, our pupils have not continued to progress so rapidly as during the previous part of the year. That the exercises of the school have not been discontinued, but part of the teachers have been ill, and the necessary changes retarded the progress of the school, as neither of the teachers have had the same class of pupils together long enough at a time to get them fairly acquainted with the routine necessary for their instruction.

Changes have already been made with a view to the relief in some measure of the present system of classification,—which it is hoped will by these means be much improved,—namely, that of having an additional school-room, and keeping children of different grades of intelligence further separated than they have been. The addition of a circus in which we can have pony exercises for our children in bad weather, is a source of great benefit.

The accompanying summary shows the number of pupils admitted and discharged since Sept. 30, 1857; also the number now connected with the school.

With many thanks for your kindness and unremitting attention to the wants of the establishment,

I remain, Respectfully Yours,

ALEXANDER McDONALD,

Resident Superintendent.

QUARTERLY SUMMARY.

The following summary shows the number of pupils admitted or discharged since Sept. 30; also the number now connected with the school:—

Number of State pupils, Sept. 30, 1857, . . .	48
“ “ “ admitted since. . .	4—52
“ “ “ Discharged, . . .	7
“ “ “ present Dec. 31, 1857, . . .	45
“ Private pupils, Sept. 30, 1857, . . .	15
“ “ “ admitted since, . . .	2—17
“ “ “ discharged since, . . .	1
“ “ “ present Dec. 31, 1857, . . .	16
Total,	61

ALEXANDER McDONALD,

Resident Superintendent.

YEARLY SUMMARY.

The following table is intended to show the number of pupils received and discharged during the year; also the number connected with the School Dec. 31, 1857:—

Number of State pupils present Jan. 1, 1857, . . .	33
Pupils supported by friends and State of Mass., . . .	5
“ “ “ and other States, . . .	9—47
Since Jan. 1, 1857, there have been admitted, . . .	32
	—
	79
Discharged,	18
	—
Number present Dec. 31, 1857, . . .	61
Of these, there are supported by appropriation from	
State of Mass.,	41
Friends and appropriation from State of Mass., . . .	4
“ and other States,	3
“ only,	13
	—
Total,	61

ALEXANDER McDONALD,

Resident Superintendent.

*Mass. School for Idiotic and Feeble-Minded Youth,
Boston, December 31, 1857.*

TREASURER'S REPORT.

Dr.

Cr.

1857.	To cash—	1857.	By cash—	1857.
Jan. 7,	Balance on hand this day from old account, .		Paid Auditor's draft in favor of the Steward, .	\$1,152 71
Feb. 16,	C. McFarland,	\$2,059 00	do do. do.	1,000 00
16,	J. Boardman,	\$56 33	do do. do.	\$1,000 00
16,	M. Teasdel,	16 67	do do. do.	667 17
16,	D. Pollard,	22 32	do do. do.	\$1,000 00
16,	G. W. Laurance,	15 00	do do. do.	576 25
16,	J. A. Perry,	19 07	do do. do.	\$,783 33
16,	Ebenezer Nye,	191 62	do do. do.	416 62
16,	Donation,	33 43	do do. do.	1,200 00
16,	Commonwealth of Mass., 2d quarterly payment,	5 31	Balance of cash on deposit in Globe Bank, .	332 19
April 8,		\$1,250 00		
18,	William Dickinson,	75 00		
18,	William Ross,	100 00		
18,	J. S. Judd,	24 00		
18,	M. W. Teasdel,	91 96		
18,	J. S. Judd,	1 12		
18,	D. Pollard,	23 14		
18,	Philo Carpenter,	91 00		
18,	Old Iron, sold,	2 00		
July 2,	Commonwealth of Mass., 3d quarterly payment, and two quarters of new grant,	1,658 22		
		\$2,500 00		

Sept. 5,	State of Rhode Island,	.	.	.	.	100 00
7,	L. Reynolds,	.	.	.	.	35 00
7,	Mr. Jackson,	.	.	.	.	20 00
7,	William Dickinson,	.	.	.	.	75 00
7,	G. W. Anthony,	.	.	.	.	17 00
7,	L. Laurence,	.	.	.	.	3 00
7,	M. W. Tinsdell,	.	.	.	.	6 00
7,	C. M. Browne,	.	.	.	.	9 43
7,	D. Pollard,	.	.	.	.	3 42
7,	William Ross,	.	.	.	.	100 00
						2,768 85
						102 50
						<u>\$6,948 32</u>
						\$352 19

Oct. 8, 1857, Bal. of cash to new acc't on deposit in Globe Bank,

Boston, October 8, 1857.

E. & O. E.

STEPHEN FAIRBANKS,

Treasurer of Mass. School for Idiotic and Feeble-Minded Youth.

October 9, 1857.—I have examined the foregoing account and find it properly vouched and correctly cast, and that a balance of \$352.19 stands to the credit of the Treasurer in the Globe Bank.

J. A. ANDREW, Auditor.

\$6,948 32

APPENDIX.

As the Reports of this Institution furnish almost the only information upon the subject of idiocy which is accessible to our citizens generally, it seems proper that they should contain notice of public events connected with efforts in behalf of the education of idiots in neighboring States.

Such was the ceremony of laying the corner stone of the Pennsylvania Training School, at Media, on the 8th December, 1857. There was a great gathering of men and women interested in the cause. Among them many persons eminent for their practical philanthropy. The ceremonies were conducted by Bishop Potter; and afterwards addresses were made by several gentlemen. Some of these have been actively engaged in promoting the cause of the education of Idiots, and have had practical knowledge of the subject.

Dr. HOWE said :—

MY FRIENDS,—You have gathered together this day to show your regard for a work which will awaken little public interest, and inspire no public enthusiasm. Few will hear about it, and fewer still will care about it. Worldly-wise men will shake their heads at you with compassionate looks of superior wisdom; and foolish men may even jest at your expense. But none will be more ignorant of your work and your purpose, and none can give you less sympathy than those unfortunates in whose behalf you labor. They cannot understand what you do for them; nor lessen your satisfaction by their thanks.

Nevertheless, it is meet and proper that you should manifest by outward show and ceremony your sense of the importance of the work which you undertake. It is even a duty to do so, for nature leads men to manifest their emotions by ceremonies, or more enduring monuments; and these manifestations have their reflex action,—for evil if the emotion be evil,—for good if that be good.

We must not then abandon forms and ceremonies as childish, because they have been so much devoted to childish things, but rather cleave to them and direct them upward. We are yet too weak in our moral nature to be loyal to the abstract good, without the help

of concrete signs. Men have never yet dispensed with this sort of language; but in all times have used public ceremonies as words in which to express their feelings upon what they regard as great actions or occasions. In the early ages, they used them to show their respect for bodily strength and courage; in the later ones, for intellectual power and acquirement; but there must be the supposed element of greatness in whatever is celebrated. This is the thing they honor. But the real greatness of an event depends not upon men's consciousness thereof. They who thought Egypt the centre of the world, reared on its fertile plains huge monuments, which were to be seen of men in all times, and immortalize certain persons and events;—while they who nailed two bits of wood together on Calvary, thought the memory thereof would perish before the timber would rot. But the purpose of the Pyramids is already forgotten. They stand half-buried in the sands of the desert, and unheeded by man; while the Cross is still going forth over the earth, a cloud by day, and a fire by night, guiding the nations through the wilderness of heathendom.

Now the occasions which call forth public ceremonies and honors, are among the best tests of the height which a people has gained in true civilization; for people honor most those they most desire to be like unto,—the strong and brave,—the rich and luxurious,—the powerful and dominant,—the learned and famous,—or the wise and good. According to the nature of the call are they who hear and heed it. It is easy to call together vast multitudes to found a monument for a victory in war; but it would be hard to assemble a dozen to celebrate the foundation of a light-house: yet a light-house is a nobler monument even than that on Bunker Hill.

Hospitals are nobler monuments even than light-houses. They are among the jewels which shine out with redeeming light through the cloud of greed and selfishness which broods over our land. To the eyes of angels they shine brighter than the church-spires which tower so ambitiously above them. Works done in them, if done in the spirit of love, are more acceptable offerings to God than even prayer and praise. They are, indeed, outward embodiments of the inward spirit of prayer and praise. But, as the stars differ in brightness, so do hospitals differ in the beauty and holiness of their mission. They differ in the nature of the works they have to do; and the order in which people provide them generally corresponds with the rising scale of their own civilization. Hospitals for the wounded are usually built before those for the sick. Besides the honor in which war is held, and the lingering halo about the soldier's head, a man struck down in battle, or in the street, seems more nearly like one of us than he who falls sick.

Upon the same principle provision is usually made for the sick before it is made for the insane. Sickness seems nearer to people than insanity does. Every one feels that he, or his child, or his brother, may fall sick at any time; but he thinks it less likely that any of his kith or kin will go mad. Hence you find hospitals for the sick among people who have not yet risen to a sense of their duty to the insane.

In appeals to the people and to government in behalf of hospitals, you have at first to press strongly the economical considerations. These are easily understood and readily answered. Many a man's reluctance to vote away public money for a hospital has been overcome by the argument that it would restore patients to reason, and so turn over to the public productive workers instead of insane paupers.

A hospital for incurables, even if it were not open to other objections, would obtain less favor than an ordinary one. You would have to address higher motives, and they might be above popular reach. The same principle holds with regard to the treatment of different classes of the infirm. The wounded, the sick, and the insane, are usually provided for before any organized effort is made in behalf of the blind and the deaf mutes.

It is the same in the treatment of these two classes. People provide asylums for the blind long before they rise to consciousness of their spiritual wants, and open schools for their instruction.

Tried by this test you will find that the extent to which public provision is made in the Old World for the suffering and the infirm, corresponds very nearly with the position of the different countries in the scale of civilization. There may be an occasional exception, as where a superstitious notion, that the insane are possessed by a spirit, causes Mussulmans to provide for their care. But it is in Christian and civilized Europe alone that hospitals are founded and maintained in a high spirit of charity.

But even there you will see that they flourish or languish according to the moral tone of the people. For instance, favored by the generous impulse of the French Revolutionary Government, schools for the blind were planted by the Abbé Haüy, from Madrid to Petersburg; but, while they multiply and flourish in France, England, Germany, Holland and Belgium, they, for the most part, languish elsewhere. You will find that a little Canton of Switzerland, maintains a school better appointed in all respects than the royal establishments of Spain and Russia.

It is much the same in this country. Hospitals and asylums abound in the North, but are rare in the South. A call for an effort in behalf of any class of infirm, who have been long neglected, is responded to eagerly by people and legislatures through the Northern and Western States, but finds only a faint echo in the South and South-West from an enlightened few. The reason is that the social institutions of the Southern States do not develop the spirit of humanity in the people. New York, Pennsylvania, and even little Massachusetts, each expend more for several classes of the infirm, than all the Southern and South-Western States together. This will not always be so; for the same humane impulses slumber in the hearts of the people, and circumstances will arise to awaken them to action.

Throughout the North there is a general admission of the justice of the claims of certain classes of the infirm upon their more favored fellows; and the admission is made without putting it upon the mere ground of charity. It is practically admitted with regard to the deaf mutes, and the blind; and it places our institutions upon a higher

plane than those of Europe, where they are held for the most part to be merely charitable, if not eleemosynary establishments.

The institutions for the blind, and those for the deaf mutes, in New England, New York, Pennsylvania, and the great States of the West, are not properly asylums or charitable establishments; they are public schools, and the pupils have as much right to the benefits thereof as ordinary children have to the benefits of common schools. It is true that the State pays for their board, which it does not for ordinary children; but this is because it is cheaper to convey them all to one central school and keep them there, than it would be to provide special means of instruction in the neighborhood of every citizen who, by paying his tax, has a claim upon the State for the instruction of his child, notwithstanding that instruction has to be given through the eye or the touch. This is the true view to take of these institutions; and it is one which saves the self-respect of pupils and of parents.

But it is a law of our nature, that every successful human effort increases the desire and the power of people to make others; and the awakened spirit of humanity will not rest satisfied while any sufferers are left uncared for. Now, therefore, that the sick, the insane, the deaf and the blind, are provided for, another and yet more unfortunate and truly wretched class, comes and begs to be embraced by the tender mercies of society from which it has hitherto been entirely cut off.

This claim will be treated as others of like nature have been treated; and the spirit of the people will show itself by the action they take upon it. In most communities, the claim cannot be heard. In others, it will be heard through the press, but scouted as absurd; in others it will be considered, but set aside as not well grounded. Even in the most advanced it will be disputed and censured; and will have to be pushed long and patiently by its friends before it finds general favor. It must, however, at last prevail by force of the principles which underlie our civilization.

Let us consider this.

Idiots form a certain proportion of the population of every generation, in every large community; and this proportion may be ascertained by considering certain principles and data, about as well as by the census. They must continue to exist in the same proportion until the physical condition of the race is greatly improved. Meantime, these unfortunates cannot provide for themselves.

Born chiefly among the ignorant, they cannot be properly cared for at home. But they cannot always be left to sink into the brutishness toward which their infirmity makes them tend, when it is left unaided. Society will not long bear the sight of neglected idiots, nor suffer in itself the demoralization that certainly follows such neglect; and therefore some organized provision for this class is sure to be one of the wants of advanced civilization.

Just as surely as active propensities call for the pomp and circumstance of war,—for show and tinsel of various kinds; just as surely as awakened intellect calls out means of turning the forces of nature to increase of wealth,—calls for literature and literary aids of all

kinds,—just so surely will awakened moral sense call for complete provision for all the real wants of all classes of the infirm and defective, and of the idiot among others.

We are sure then of final success ; but, in presenting to the public the claims of the idiot for a share of its beneficence, we cannot urge those economical considerations which enter into the account in the case of the insane, the blind, and the deaf. We cannot remove idocy ; and we must be careful not to hurt our cause by promising too much in the way of lessening its evils. Idocy is a terrible,—it is a radical,—it is an incurable defect. Do all that we may, we cannot make out of the *real idiot* a reasoning and self-guiding man. We can do a great deal for him. We can arrest the downward tendency to brutishness which his infirmity entails. We can give him habits of decency, order and propriety. We can teach him even some elementary truths ; and, what is more important still, we may draw out and strengthen his moral and social faculties, so as to make them lessen the activity of his animal nature ; but, after all, he must ever be in child-like dependence upon others for guidance and support.

I speak not of exceptional cases,—of those whose mental development has been arrested or retarded by external circumstances ; nor of those children of peculiar mental organization who have been pushed by mistake, or by cruelty, into the category of idiocy, and from which careful and special training may redeem them ; but I speak of the great class of real idiots—numbering thousands in its sad array in these United States—and I say of this class generally, that we cannot urge the argument of economy in favor of public institutions for their care, as we can in favor of some others. They can indeed be made less burdensome, but not materially productive. They are idiots for life ; and I repeat what I said just now,—idocy is a terrible,—a radical,—an incurable defect.

Upon what ground, then, shall we put the appeal in their favor ? Clearly upon the broad ground of humanity. Upon the fact that they are human and helpless,—we, human and strong. As the greatness of the enterprise which you this day inaugurate comes from its humility, so the strength of the claim of this unfortunate class comes from their lowliness and helplessness.

Your community is civilized enough to hear and admit this claim. There has been an organized effort among you for some time in behalf of this unfortunate class, and the building which is to be reared upon the foundations you this day lay, will be one of the results of those efforts. Your experimental school having succeeded it is to become a permanent one.

The material structure, however, will be of small account, compared with the principles upon which your institution shall be conducted.

This is a very important and difficult matter. It will be found that the difficulties which meet us in making public provisions for other classes of the infirm, meet us in even greater numbers when providing for idiots. There is danger of our traversing some of the great laws of nature.

We must bear in mind that public charitable institutions are, in many respects, social evils, and only to be tolerated so far as they remedy or lessen greater evils.

While we recognize the facts that idiocy constitutes one of the present phenomenal conditions of our race,—that of every million children born a certain number are idiots,—we must still bear in mind that this phenomenal condition is not an inherent and essential one; and that it is not necessarily permanent. It will doubtless continue during many generations, but it may and ought to grow less and less apparent until it fades out of sight.

Saving the very rare cases arising from accidental mechanical injury, idiocy is the consequence of violation of some of the natural laws of our being: laws which, though now understood by few, may become so plain that even those who run may read. It is a punishment drawn down upon the offenders and upon their children; and though the sin may have been committed through ignorance, the punishment will not be abated one jot or tittle. It is intended to be correctional in its operation, and when properly regarded, it will be so.

A community intelligent and religious enough to live up to the laws of our nature, not limiting their obedience to ten, but obeying all God's commandments, however numerous and however revealed, such a community would have no idiots, or certainly not enough to need special provision.

Now we must take care that, while doing our duty to these unfortunates, and also to ourselves by following the impulses of our hearts in their service, we do not follow so blindly as to traverse some of the correctional effect of this great and beneficent law.

I hesitate not to say, that immense evils have followed and do follow the neglect of this consideration, in laying down rules for the establishment and support of many public charities.

I know very well that, do what we may, nature will finally carry out her purposes; but we may do much toward hastening or retarding them. For instance, if the enormous expenditures now made by Government in preparation for war should be devoted to humane purposes, it would be easy for the State to assume the whole charge of idiotic children, blind children, and deaf mutes; to teach them, board and clothe them, and take care of them for life, thus relieving the parent of all care and anxiety on their account. This, however, would be a very foolish course, and would have many bad effects.

No! the law was intended to bear hard upon society; harder upon the kindred of the sufferer; but hardest of all upon the parents, the immediate offenders; and though we must see that they do not utterly break down under it, we must not shield them entirely. They must provide for their offspring;—by toil and suffering, if need be. Failing the parents, the relatives must bear the burden; and when they cannot or will not take it, the parish or community in which the child was born should assume it. It would be easy to give many reasons for insisting upon this principle, and to show the ill effect of departing from it.

There is another consideration which we must not forget. It is unwise to congregate together persons suffering under a common infirmity. We violate a clear natural principle when we do so, and draw down evils as inevitable consequences of our error. All the objections to establishment for the permanent separate residence of persons of one sex, apply with three-fold force when the inmates have one common infirmity or defect.

We plainly traverse this principle in building up institutions for the mutes and the blind; and the evil consequences are greater or less according to the plans upon which the establishment is organized. The evils are greater if it be in the nature of an asylum for permanent residence; less if it be a mere school for instruction and training during a few years of youth.

The same considerations apply, though with *less force*, to school establishments for idiotic persons; and you will doubtless keep them in view while laying down the principles upon which your school is to be regulated.

By evil consequences, I mean not merely the apparent wrong to the city or community in which we gather an undue proportion of infirm or defective persons, many of whom must finally come upon it for support; but I allude to other evils which are sure to follow both to the infirm or defective whom we gather and keep in asylums, and to the community from whence we take them.

In this, as in every thing else, true wisdom is real kindness; and though it seems hard and selfish to resist the kind impulse which bids us gather together the infirm and defective and cherish them in asylums, it is really kind as well as wise to follow the impulse very cautiously, and only as far as we are obliged to do it.

Real kindness teaches us to regard the infirm or defective as being, in all the essentials of their nature, like ourselves; and to lessen the moral peculiarities which grow out of their bodily infirmity or defect as much as possible by constant association with sound persons. But when we treat them as a separate class, and give them for household associates persons like to themselves,—persons having the same infirmity or defect,—we not only put them far away from the bosom of society, but we *intensify all the moral peculiarities which grow out of the infirmity or defect*.

There are, indeed, some compensating circumstances, but these I need not now dwell upon. Nature points to separation and diffusion of infirm and defective persons as widely as possible in the great healthy and sound community, with a view to the final absorption and disappearance of all inborn infirmities.

But should I follow out all the trains of thought suggested by this subject, I should weary you, and take the time from abler speakers. Besides, to urge upon you reasons for making wise provision by the public for teaching and training the idiotic children of poor parents, would be like trying to prove the truth of mathematical axioms or the beauty of Christian precepts.

Nature teaches this great truth,—every organized being may be greatly modified by external influences in its early periods of life.

Human beings are especially subject to this law; and idiots are human.

Political science teaches a second great truth—the public should provide means for instruction to every child not otherwise provided for.

He who bade the little children come unto him, teaches a third great truth,—not alone the ten and five talents are to be multiplied, but even the one poor humble one must be cherished and increased.

I will only add my conviction of the final success of your work, and my earnest wish that it may be great and near at hand.

DR. H. B. WILBUR, of Syracuse, New York, said :—

MR. PRESIDENT :—After listening to the address of my friend, Dr. Howe, who has preceded me, I do not feel like trespassing upon your time by any extended remarks, and yet I cannot absolutely refuse, when so kindly called upon, to give a word of encouragement to the enterprise, here, to-day, so happily initiated.

This is not the first occasion of the kind, at which I have been present, and I am reminded of a similar ceremony at the laying of the corner-stone of the New York Asylum for Idiots, with which I am now connected.

A brief statement of the history of that Institution will afford you far more of encouragement, than any thing else I could offer.

Unsuccessful efforts to establish an institution for idiots in New York had been made in 1846. In the winter of 1851, the effort was renewed. Dr. Howe gave an exhibition of some of his pupils, before the legislature of New York; but so near the close of the session that no legislative action resulted. However, at an extra session, in July of the same year, an Act was passed, establishing an Experimental School for the education of idiots.

A Board of Trustees was appointed, consisting of gentlemen, whose opinions, as to the results of the experiment, would have the greatest influence upon the public opinion of the State.

The institution was opened in October, 1851. It was located in Albany, and but a short distance from the capital. Here, for four successive winters, it was visited by a large proportion of the members of both branches of the legislature. Every opportunity was afforded them for learning the principles and observing the methods of instruction that were there employed, and so strong was the conviction induced, that no vote was recorded against any legislation in its behalf, in either House.

From this humble beginning, and after the lapse of but six years, the State of New York now boasts itself of an institution for Idiots; established upon a permanent basis; accommodated in a building erected especially for its use, and of the most substantial character, and supported by a liberal annual appropriation from the State Treasury.

I rejoice to say, that in the State of New York the education of idiots is placed upon the same footing with the education of the blind or deaf mutes. It has been recognized as a legitimate object of the State's beneficence, by successive acts of legislation, for a period of years.

All this has been accomplished, not by mere appeals to the sympathies of the members of the several legislative bodies; but it is the result of an intelligent observation on their part of what was actually accomplished in the case of idiots by an appropriate instruction.

Standing here to-day, I may assure you that my faith in the practicability of educating idiots, is not diminished by years of labor in the cause. I may assure you, that the wisest and best men in the State of New York, are thoroughly awakened to the importance of institutions for such a purpose, both as an act of public charity, and as a wise measure of political economy; and furthermore, that what has been a public *need* for generations, has there ripened into a public *want*, at this present time.

There is here, to-day, a gentleman, who has been a member of the Board of Trustees of the New York Institution from the beginning. I shall leave for him a more particular account of what has been accomplished in the State of New York, in this cause. I close with an expression of my good wishes for the future success of this undertaking.

MR. TITUS, of New York, after giving a graphic account of the origin of the New York State Institution, said:—

The enterprise of training and teaching idiots was instituted on the theory, that where there is a being formed in *the image of the Creator* there is a soul; where there is a soul there is a mind; and that mind, however feeble or however obscured, *unless insane*, can always be strengthened and educated (*drawn out*) to some extent; the measure of improvement, depending on the measure of mind and its accidental condition. I think no person will desire to controvert this theory; if admitted, how serious becomes our Christian obligation in the matter, for idiocy is a calamity to which all are liable. The cases I have just noticed, are from all grades of society, from the almshouse, the cellars of squalid poverty, and from the splendid mansion of the wealthy; and because many of us have, in mercy been spared its visitation, we should extend a liberal, *practical* commiseration to those who are afflicted.

My friends, it is demonstrated, that wherever the proper system is applied, idiots can be practically improved, and their condition permanently benefited; and this is all that can be justly required to establish their claim for sympathy and aid on the same footing with the other *unfortunates* of our race. Through ignorance the Christian world heretofore has been lamentably delinquent in its duty to this class.

The children of indigent parents are provided for, the orphans have homes, the sick have hospitals, the insane, the deaf mutes and the blind have asylums, but the poor idiot has been entirely neglected—yes, I may say, studiously avoided. Let us reflect on this aspect of the matter, as it has come under our individual observation.

If in any social circle there is known to be an indigent child, how readily is assistance proffered!—if a blind child, what exertion o

relieve its gloomy life! if a deaf mute, how apt to become the pet of the neighborhood! if an insane person, how sincere and earnest the desire to afford relief! but if there be an *idiot*, how uniformly do all avoid not only its presence but even the mention of the case! Yes, whilst the Christian charity of our age has shone with cheering effect on all the others, the poor idiot has been kept immured in darkness, and generally dependent solely on that member of the household, who is ever most steadfast in the work of love—on the mother!

For the credit our Christianity let it be understood that this seeming disregard, has not resulted from a want of feeling for the wretchedness of the idiot, nor from a just sympathy for their friends, but from a mistaken conviction that their case was hopelessly beyond the reach of relief. Now that we know there is hope, how can we withhold any longer their fair share of private sympathy and of public aid? No, let us make reparation for our past omissions, by extraordinary exertions in behalf of their pitiful claims. Let us, as we are able to do "*teach and train the idiots*," so that they may grow up less burdensome to their friends, less repulsive to society, and less wretched in their lives.

In conclusion, I will presume to say, that whenever we are called on to co-operate in wise philanthropic efforts, it behooves us to bear in mind, that the most successful results obtained by our efforts in the pursuit of fame, or of riches, can only accompany us to the brink of the grave, we can hold on to them no farther than there, *they cannot follow us*; but we have the Divine assurance, that in the cause of good, *our works do follow us*.

DR. GEORGE BROWN, of Barre, Massachusetts, said:—

MR. PRESIDENT:—Those who have spoken before me, have told you of the true grounds on which the claims for the support of Institutions for the Idiot should rest; namely, pure benevolence and philanthropy; a claim which none but a high civilization will admit and act upon. The common question of thinking men at present is "*cui bono*?" What is the great practical result?

To this question we reply that there is a class of persons of imbecile mind, that by this training, and this alone, can be brought up from the depth of nothingness and idiocy, to at least such a rank in society, as to be capable not only of profitable labor, but to take part in the real business of life. And is it nothing to attain the real worldly redemption of even *one* such, and can we not by pointing to such a result make silent the objector to the cause?

To redeem a few from idiocy, as the direct result of this special training, and save them from that lower depth to which they are, if left to themselves, inevitably sinking, is surely worth all the effort and cost of the enterprise.

In the hands of many of you present, I notice the Report of this Institution for the current year, and as proof of what I have just said, the last case therein mentioned, taken from the Report of the Connecticut Commissioners, though so unpromising at first, is now self-supporting, in a factory in Maine.

Another case under my care, well known to my friend, Dr. Wilbur, unable to walk at eight years, unable to talk at twelve, was last year receiving two hundred and fifty dollars per annum, in a factory in Portsmouth, N. H. Others will take respectable positions.

But though generally speaking, most of these by training, become useful upon a farm or elsewhere, yet the true ground for their claim on public appropriations, is the obligation of all high civilization, tenderly to take care of all classes of the unfortunate, and it is the crowning glory of this noble State, that she is now about to do so on a most liberal scale.

But, citizens of Media, allow me a word to you, personally and individually, on this matter.

By your presence here, and the many civilities you have extended to us to-day, and the fact reported to me of your liberal aid to the Directors by contributions of money to purchase a site, you have shown a noble interest in this great charity.

The building in all its becoming proportions on yonder hill-top, the graded lawn, the well-tilled fields, cannot fail to add another attraction to your beautiful village, and in fact it will become the great centre of interest here. As citizens you are bound to give its Directors and teachers your sympathy and kindly co-operation; for I assure you it is a great source of comfort to them, amid the many self-denials and discouragements of their daily work, to know that the community in which they are located, appreciate their labors.

In a few months, Dr. Parrish and his household, will be duly installed here in your midst, and you will often see the subjects of his care in your public places,—at the concert,—at the lecture,—at the church.

Let no careless word escape your lips that will fall harshly upon the ear of the unfortunate, or cause a blush for you, from those who feel true sympathy for them. Remember always, that the Institution is for the benefit and happiness of its subjects, and not for the convenience or advantage of any one else. Do all in your power as citizens, to guard and protect these subjects of misfortune, from the rude or rough acts of the thoughtless and ignorant, and give them all your kindly sympathy.

On proper occasions visit the Institution, and see for yourselves its management and its success; but do not be intrusive, remembering that not at all times of day or night, should you claim the exercise of your right of visitation, unless officially obligated.

And, with God's blessings on the effort, I am sure you will all appreciate that as the coronation of charities, which elevates the soul from mere grovelling instincts, to an appreciation of eternal truth.

*Massachusetts School for Idiotic and Feeble-Minded Youth,
Eighth, between M and N Streets, South Boston.*

BOSTON,

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Form of Questions to be answered by the Parents or Friends of Applicants for admission to the School; the answers to which are for the use of the Superintendent, and not for publication. Neither the name of the applicant, nor his family, will be published.

Where was the applicant born, and when?

Were the father and mother related by blood? and if so, in what degree?

Have there been any cases of insanity, epilepsy, idiocy, blindness, deafness, or of any infirmity of body or mind, in the family of the father or of the mother, or any among his near relations? If so, please to state what they were?

Do you know of any peculiarity of constitution, or of bodily condition, in any of the relatives of the father or of the mother? For instance, are the members of either family consumptive or scrofulous, or subject to salt-rheum, or eruptions of any kind?

What manner of man was the father bodily? That is, was he strong and healthy, or weak and puny?

What was his age at the time of the birth of the applicant?

Was he a person of average mental ability?

What was his business or calling?

What were his habits with regard to temperance?

What manner of woman was the mother bodily?

What was her calling?

What were her habits with regard to temperance?

At what age was she married to the father of the applicant?

Was she a person of average mental ability?

How many children has she had?

How many before, and how many after, the birth of the applicant?

How old was she when the applicant was born?

Was there any thing peculiar in the bodily or mental condition of any of the other children?

What was the state of the mother's bodily health during the time she was pregnant with the applicant?

Was she subject to any bodily injury, or disease, or to any extraordinary mental emotions, as fright, grief, &c.?

Was the child born at the full period of gestation?

Were there any extraordinary circumstances attendant upon the delivery? If so, describe them.

What has been the general health and the bodily condition of the applicant?

Has he been injured by any fall, blow, or other accident, severe enough to be followed, as a matter of course, by serious consequences?

At what period was it first observed that there was any thing peculiar about the applicant?

Has there been observed, at any time since birth, any thing peculiar in the shape or condition of the head?

Does the head now differ in shape or condition from the head of ordinary persons of the same age?

What is now the general health of the applicant?

Is the applicant now subject, or has he ever been subject, to epilepsy?

What is now the weight of the applicant?

Is there any infirmity of body, or any striking peculiarity?

How is the appetite for food and drink?

Is the applicant active, vigorous, running about and noticing things, or the contrary?

What is the state of the sense of sight? Is the eye bright or dull?

What is the state of the sense of hearing? Is it quick or sluggish?

Does the applicant show any sensibility to musical sounds?

What is the state of the sense of smell?

What is the state of the sense of taste? Is the applicant particular about what he eats, or will he swallow things without regard to taste?

Is he gluttonous?

What are the habits of the applicant with regard to personal cleanliness?

Can the applicant talk, and if so, like a person of what age?

Can he make a regular sentence, containing nouns, verbs in the conditional mode, adjectives and adverbs, &c.?

Does he use understandingly such words as *or* and *if*?

Please give several specimens of his mode of talking, and be careful to put down the words exactly as he uses them.

Can he dress and undress himself?

Can he feed himself?

Does he use a spoon, or knife and fork?

Can he tie his shoes in a regular knot?

Can he do any work, and what kind?

What are his personal habits?

Does he hide, break, or destroy things?

Does he get up in the night and wander about?

Is he obedient?

Does he come when called?

Does he go astray?

Is he passionate?

Is he given to self-abuse, or masturbation?

Has there been such watchfulness, that you can be sure that he is free from all habits of self-pollution?

Please state any facts that may show the peculiar character of the applicant.

TERMS OF ADMISSION, &c.

The best age for admission is between six and twelve years.

The institution is not intended for epileptic or insane children, nor for those who are incurably hydrocephalic or paralytic, and any such will not be retained, to the exclusion of more improvable subjects.

Children will be received upon trial for one month, at the end of which time a report upon the case will be made to the parents.

Children must come well provided with plain, strong clothing, and stout shoes for walking in any weather. They must be renewed as often as is necessary, at the expense of the applicants. Those who tear and destroy their clothing must be provided with garments made expressly for them, and of such form and texture as not to be easily torn.

The children of indigent parents, in Massachusetts, will be received gratis. For others, a charge will be made proportionate to the trouble and cost of treating them.

Sufficient surety will be required for the removal of the pupils whenever they may be discharged.

Persons applying for the admission of children as beneficiaries of

Massachusetts, should address the Governor. They must also fill out certain blanks, the form of which is as follows :—

Form of Application for Beneficiaries in Massachusetts.

To his Excellency the Governor.

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SIR,—The undersigned, citizen of Massachusetts, and inhabitant of the town of _____, respectfully represents that his son [or daughter],* named _____ and aged _____ years, is so deficient in intellect that he cannot be taught in the Common Schools, as other youth are; and he therefore requests that your Excellency would recommend him for admission as a pupil to the Massachusetts School for teaching and training Idiotic and Feeble-Minded Youth, as a State beneficiary.

Respectfully yours,

_____.

The application should be accompanied by two certificates, in the following form: †—

I.

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I, _____, one of the selectmen of the town of _____, hereby certify, that, in my opinion, _____ is not wealthy, and could not well afford to pay \$150 per year for the instruction of _____ at the School for Idiotic and Feeble-Minded Youth.

(Signed,)

_____.

II.

185 .

I, _____, citizen of Massachusetts, physician, and practitioner in the town of _____, hereby certify that I have examined _____ and find that he is not insane, but is so deficient in mental ability that he cannot be taught in the Common Schools, as others of his age are.

His bodily health is _____, and he has no cutaneous or contagious disorder.

(Signed,)

_____.

N. B. The physician is earnestly requested to state, in writing, his opinion of the *cause* of the person's mental deficiency; to state

* If a town pauper, the overseers of the poor may apply as for their ward.

† The same may be used in Rhode Island.

whether he is or has been epileptic; also, to mention any organic or functional peculiarity that he may have observed. It may be greatly for the advantage of the person, that the physician should send in writing a full and minute account of the case, with his own thoughts and suggestions in regard to it.

If the applicant is admitted as a beneficiary, he must be provided with a paper signed by two responsible persons, in form of a guaranty for removal, as follows:—

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We, the undersigned, citizens of Massachusetts, and householders in the town of _____, respectively pledge ourselves, that, should _____ be received into the Massachusetts School for teaching and training Idiotic and Feeble-Minded Youth, he shall be kept properly supplied with decent clothing; that he shall be removed during vacations, (if his removal be required); and that, whenever he shall be discharged, he shall be removed at once, and the institution relieved from all responsibility for his support.

(Signed,)

_____.

For further particulars, address Dr. S. G. HOWE, Boston.

OFFICERS OF THE INSTITUTION,

1858.

<i>President,</i>	SAMUEL G. HOWE, Boston.
<i>Vice-President,</i>	EMORY WASHBURN, Cambridge.
<i>Treasurer,</i>	STEPHEN FAIRBANKS, Boston.
<i>Secretary,</i>	EDWARD JARVIS, Dorchester.

TRUSTEES.

JOHN A. ANDREW,	Boston.
GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,	Groton.
JOHN FLINT,	Boston.
SAMUEL G. HOWE,	Boston.
EDWARD JARVIS,	Dorchester.
JOSEPH LYMAN,	Boston.
WILLIAM MINOT,	Boston.
WILLIAM O. MOSELY,	Boston.
GEORGE RUSSEL,	Boston.
EMORY WASHEURN,	Cambridge.
STEPHEN M. WELD,	West Roxbury.

<i>Resident Superintendent,</i>	ALEXANDER McDONALD.
<i>Matron,</i>	MRS. M. McDONALD.

VISITING COMMITTEES FOR THE YEAR.*

February and March,	MESSRS. JARVIS AND LYMAN.
March and April,	" LYMAN AND FLINT.
April and May,	" FLINT AND MOSELY.
May and June,	" MOSELY AND WELD.
June and July,	" WELD AND MINOT.
July and August,	" MINOT AND WASHBURN.
August and September,	" WASHBURN AND STORER.
September and October,	" STORER AND BOUTWELL.

* By alteration of the By-Laws, the Annual Meeting will be holden and the officers elected hereafter in October. This arrangement therefore extends only to that time.

